



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE **BRUCE McPHERSON**

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## **Secretary of State Bruce McPherson Delivers HAVA Money for Californians**

*\$169 Million of Federal Funding Released to Make Voting User-friendly*

Sacramento – Secretary of State Bruce McPherson today announced the receipt of the remaining \$169 million in the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) appropriation of federal money owed to California. Secretary McPherson was joined at a news conference today by President of the California Association of County Election Officials and Registrars of Voters Conny McCormack of Los Angeles County, Rebecca Martinez of Madera County, Steve Rodermund of Orange County, and Jim McCauley of Placer County, as well as Assistant Secretary of State for Elections and HAVA, Brad Clark. This critically important money will be distributed to counties to improve their voting systems and make voting in California more user-friendly.

“The release of this \$169 million is great news for California voters,” said Secretary of State Bruce McPherson. “Counties can now confidently begin to implement their plans to make voting more open and available for the people of this state. California’s election officials and I have the same fundamental goals – to provide safe, secure elections where voters can vote with confidence and accuracy. This federal funding will help us reach those goals together.”

Conny McCormack, Los Angeles County Clerk/Recorder and Registrar said, “County registrars are committed to fair, impartial, and efficiently conducted elections. This money will help us to do that. We are pleased to be partners with Secretary McPherson and we are grateful that his leadership gave federal officials the necessary reassurance to release this money that we so badly need.”

The HAVA funds being released will make it possible to proceed with important work to serve California voters, including funds for:

- New voting systems that make voting more accessible, more accurate, more secure and more voter friendly;
- New education and training tools so that voters, poll workers and election officials understand voting rights and responsibilities, and how elections work under these new federal mandates;
- Voter access to improved voter registration rolls and greater access to the ballot box.

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Secretary McPherson traveled to Washington, DC on May 5<sup>th</sup> to personally assure the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) of California's commitment to properly implement HAVA after nearly a year of delays.

Secretary McPherson carried California's Certificate of Compliance to the EAC. The \$169 million is the outstanding balance that was withheld by the EAC for nine months following reports of improper spending of HAVA money under the previous Secretary of State.

Before county elections officials can use this money, the Legislature must provide the Secretary of State spending authority in accordance with the state's approved spending plan. Approving the Secretary of State's budget is the next critical procedural step in this process.

"My job is to make sure this federal money does the most good for the greatest number of Californians. I want California to lead the country in creativity, innovation and impartiality in election administration once again," said Secretary McPherson.